

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
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R 271023Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7067
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

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CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PEPR, ET, KE, SO, UR
SUBJ: SOVIET AMBASSADOR STRESSES SUPPORT FOR LIBERATION
STRUGGLES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND JUSTIFIES SUPPORT OF ETHIOPIA

1. SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO KENYA, DR. BORIS MIROSHNICHENKO,
ADDRESSED PRESS CLUB LUNCHEON IN NAIROBI APRIL 25. SPEECH,
WHICH WAS USUAL "BOILER PLATE" (TEXT TO BE POUCHED TO
DEPARTMENT AND MOSCOW) FOCUSED ON SOVIET SUPPORT FOR
AFRICANS "STRUGGLING FOR THEIR FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE...
AGAINST THE SHAMEFUL PHENOMENON OF RACISM AND APARTHEID."
HE PLEDGED SOVIET SUPPORT TO AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS,
ZIMBABWE POPULAR FRONT AND SWAPO. MIROSHNICHENKO
EXTOLLED VIRTUES OF SOVIET UNION ASSISTANCE TO AFRICAN
NATIONS, ADDING "LAST BUT NOT LEAST IS MILITARY COOPERATION
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AND SUPPORT RENDERED WHENEVER AFRICAN COUNTRIES NEED
THEM TO ACHIEVE POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE OR PROTECTION
FROM IMPERIALISM AND REACTIONARY ENCROACHMENTS."

2. SOVIET AMBASSADOR BLAMED SOMALIA FOR OGADEN WAR
WHICH HE CLAIMED "SOVIET UNION DID ITS BEST TO PREVENT...
THEN EXTINGUISH... BY PEACEFUL MEANS." HE CONTINUED THAT THE

SOMALI LEADERSHIP "WAS TEMPTED BY THE PROMISES OF CERTAIN EXTERNAL FORCES" AND CONTINUES "TO PERSIST IN ITS TERRITORIAL CLAIMS TO ETHIOPIA AND OTHER NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES WHICH CONTRADICTS THE KNOWN PRINCIPLES OF THE UN AND OAU AND EVOKES THE JUST CONCERN AND CONDEMNATION OF MOST INDEPENDENT STATES OF AFRICA."

3. IN SUBSEQUENT Q AND A SESSION, WHEN ASKED IF USSR HAS OFFERED ARMS TO KENYA, HE REPLIED, "WHY DON'T YOU ASK THE KENYANS?" IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ON ERITREA, HE SAID, "THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT CONSIDERED ERITREA AN INTERNAL ETHIOPIAN MATTER," ADDING THAT THE GOK AND USSR WERE IN AGREEMENT ON THAT POINT. RESPONDING TO FURTHER QUERIES, THE AMBASSADOR DENIED THERE WERE "SOVIET TROOPS" IN ETHIOPIA AND CLAIMED HIS GOVERNMENT HAS NO CONTROL OVER THE CUBANS.

4. COMMENT: THE Q AND A SESSION WAS NOT EASY FOR THE AMBASSADOR, BUT HE MANAGED TO HANDLE IT QUITE WELL BY SOME ARTFUL DODGING. AS FAR AS WE CAN TELL, THE MOST INTERESTING REMARK WAS HIS ASSERTION THAT THE USSR CONSIDERS ERITREA "AN INTERNAL ETHIOPIAN MATTER." IT SEEMS TO US THAT SUCH A STATEMENT WOULD LEAVE THE SOVIET UNION AND CUBA WIDE OPEN FOR A CHARGE OF INTERFERENCE IN ETHIOPIA'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS SHOULD THEY MILITARILY INTERVENE IN ERITREA.
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